

School Psychology

AN ORIENTATION TO THE FIELD

WHAT IS SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY?

“School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams that support students’ ability to learn and teachers’ ability to teach. They apply expertise in **mental health, learning, and behavior**, to help children and youth succeed **academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally**. School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community.”

COMMON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Psychoeducational assessment: *School psychologists spend the majority of their time conducting formal assessments on students to determine their overall academic, social, behavioral, and emotional functioning. These assessments help determine if a student needs additional special education services*

Consultation: *School psychologists can also provide consultation services for parents and teachers to indirectly assist in both individual students and the larger school system*

Intervention: *They also provide individual and group therapy and other direct interventions for children and adolescents*

Research and Education

In service training

Administration

DEGREE OPTIONS

- **Masters-Level, Specialist-Level, Doctoral-Level**
 - Because there are limited to no job opportunities for masters-level clinicians, only specialist and doctoral-level degrees will be discussed in this presentation

	Specialist-Level	Doctoral-Level
Credit Hours	Minimum of 60 graduate semester hours	Minimum of 90 graduate semester hours
Time to Graduation	Minimum of 3 years of full-time study at the graduate level, including internship	5 to 6 years of full-time study at the graduate level, including internship
Internship Requirements	1200 hour full-time internship completed on a full-time basis over one year or at least a half-time basis over two consecutive years. At least 600 hours of the internship must be completed in a school setting	Typically a 1200-1500 hour full-time internship completed on a full-time basis over one year or at least a half-time basis over two consecutive years. At least 600 hours of the internship must be completed in a school setting. ² Some doctoral internships in school psychology provide up to 2000 hours.

CAREER OPTIONS IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

- **Specialist-Level**
 - Accepted for certification or licensure to provide full professional practice within schools or related educational settings
 - In some states, you may be able to qualify for private or independent practice opportunities, but most specialist-level school psychologists practice within schools/educational settings
- **Doctoral-Level**
 - Allows for a broader range of options and may work in the following settings:
 - Schools
 - Private or independent practice
 - Clinics
 - Hospitals
 - Research/academia
- **Program Approval/Accreditation**
 - Specialist-Level: Eligible for NASP accreditation/approval
 - Doctoral-Level: Eligible for NASP accreditation/approval and APA accreditation

STANDARDS FOR GRADUATE PREPARATION (per NASP)

The school psychology program ensures that all candidates demonstrate basic professional competencies, including both knowledge and skills, in the 10 domains of school psychology contained within NASP's Practice Model. The 10 domains include:

- Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability
- Consultation and Collaboration
- Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills
- Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills
- School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning
- Preventive and Responsive Services
- Family–School Collaboration Services
- Diversity in Development and Learning
- Research and Program Evaluation
- Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

APPLICATION PROCESS TIPS

- Written application materials are typically due December 1
 - Personal statement, resume/CV, GRE scores, Letters of Recommendation
- If programs decide that you “look good on paper,” they will invite you to campus for an interview day!
- Interview day is all about determining how good of a “fit” there is between you and the program.
 - Remember... this goes both ways. This is your chance to see whether the program matches your needs.

INTERVIEW DAY TIPS

- **Come prepared!**
 - Check out the program's website ahead of time to refresh your memory of the faculty you will be meeting with. Make note of the faculty's research areas, and brainstorm questions or talking points you may want to use in interview sessions. This goes for faculty members beyond the one you indicated interest in working with.
 - Make note of what stood out to you about the particular program you are visiting with. What sets it apart from the others? You can almost guarantee that you will be asked, "Why this program?" during your interview day experience.
 - Because interview days can happen several months after you submitted your application, it may be helpful to review your own CV and personal statements so that you don't forget about key experiences or talking points.
- **Ask questions**
 - Ask questions to faculty and students alike. Asking questions demonstrates your interest in the program.

INTERVIEW DAY TIPS (CONT.)

- Whenever possible, attend the extra social events hosted by the program
 - This can help you get a better understanding of what the students and faculty are like. If the program offers an event the evening before interviews, this is a great way to settle nerves and make introductions before the big day.
- Don't think of the other interviewees as your "competition"
 - Be mindful of your social interactions with everyone at interview day, not just the students and faculty at the graduate program. It may reflect poorly on you if you ice others out and appear rude.
- Be yourself!
 - While professionalism is important during interviews, it's just as important to be yourself.
 - Dress for the occasion (business casual or business professional, depending on the recommendations of the program), but make sure you feel comfortable and confident. This will help your personality shine through.

**Best of luck during the
application process!**

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